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Umno-assets

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J TTRA , Aug 6 (Bernama)-- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today Umno is close to getting back its assets totalling about \$1,500 million from the Official Assignee.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said this was because Umno now had proof that more than 55 per cent of its former members had rejoined the party.

The law stipulates that Umno, which was deregistered by the court in 1988 but subsequent 1 y r-e-registered , must prove that more than 50 per cent of its original members have rejoined the party to enable it to claim back its assets.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said that out of the 1.4 million members before the deregistration, more than 700,000 had returned to the party.

Umno would claim back its assets the soonest possible, he told reporters after meeting government officers at the Kubang Pasu district officer's residence here.-- more

♥06/08/21-11MST

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Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir , who is also Kubang Pasu Umno division chief, earlier met divisional committee members at the Umno office.

He said members were given until the end of this month to verify their membership but the party should not wait for the deadline to expire before filing the claims .

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said although Umno had clear proof to make the claims, there was a difference of opinion on how to go about proving the membership.

+Actually, in the Umno form there is a question on whether the person was a former member but since this is not verified before a Commissioner of Oath, some feel it is not valid,+ he said.

However, the party had collected receipts, membership register, letters and other types of evidence to show that more than 700,000 of the present Umno members were former members, he said.-- more

♥06/08/21-12MST

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At the meeting with government officers , Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said states with their own sources of revenue should reduce dependence on the federal government to implement development projects.

This would put the federal government in a better position to help poor states such as Kedah which needed aid.

+The federal government wants to help all states but it does not have enough money to meet all requests from the state,+ he added.

However, the government would try its best to give additional aid to the needy states, he said.

In his speech, Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Osman Aroff had said Kedah needed additional aid from the federal government to implement development projects.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, asked for his comment on this, said although the country's economic growth was expanding rapidly at more than nine per cent annually , government revenue only grew at two per cent annually. -- Rernama